

Unfavorable Odds

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Episode 10: The Complicated Heart

Guest: Sarah Mae
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Sarah: I come out with it and say “Mom, when you drink, you’re really mean to me and she looked at me and she just laughed. I was like “I think you’re an alcoholic.” She just laughed and said, “So what.” I do what a 14-year-old would—I don’t know how to fight back, right? So I just think I’m going to hurt her. I go “I don’t even think I love you anymore,” and she just laughed again.

Kim: From the FamilyLife podcast network, this is *Unfavorable Odds*. I’m Kim Anthony.

Unfavorable Odds is all about finding hope and help in those seasons of life when things get pretty difficult. Jesus has promised us that whenever we walk through those dark tough times—He’s always going to be with us. So on each episode of this podcast, we’ll be talking with people who have learned how in those very difficult times—those dark places of life—to draw their strength from Jesus.

Years ago, my husband and I were doing youth ministry and we had some kids who were pretty difficult to work with. They were making poor choices, acting out of anger, and they would start to move in the right direction—and we thought we were making progress but then they’d fall back into the same pattern over and over again. They were struggling to do the right thing and it seemed as if they weren’t able to gain any traction.

What we didn’t understand at the time were the reasons behind their behavior. They weren’t just bad kids, not hopeless cases. They were hurting—doing whatever they thought would get their deepest needs met.

They were a lot like Sarah Mae was when she was growing up. She had to navigate living with an abusive alcoholic mother, the effects of sexual abuse, and even, the aftermath of an abortion. Sarah Mae is the author of the book, *The Complicated Heart: Loving Even When It Hurts*. I sat down with Sarah and we talked about how she was able to heal and forgive even when her circumstances didn’t change.

Sarah: My parents had gotten divorced before I was even a year old. My dad got custody of me—so I think my mom, maybe, had me for a little bit but then my dad got custody. I grew up with my dad and my stepmom and I would only see my mom in the summers. When I would see her in the summers, I thought she was seriously the coolest mom. I loved it. I had the best memories. It was wonderful.

When I was 14, I had this phone conversation with my mom. We were just talking about how I wanted to live with her. She said “You know, you can live with me. You’re old enough to make that decision and that there was a judge involved, you could just tell them you want to live with me. They’re going to side with you because you’re 14.”

During this time it was pretty tumultuous in my house with my stepmom. We just didn’t get along very well even though she basically raised me since I was two. My dad had been with her, and my dad was fantastic, but our relationship was rocky.

So two things were happening. One, I was becoming a young woman and wanted a mother. And two, my stepmom relationship was not awesome. I went to my dad and said, “Dad, I really want to live with my mom, and you can’t stop me.” I was all teenagerly. [Laughter] I don’t even think I gave him a chance. I said, “I’m going to live with her, and you can’t stop me.” What was he going to say? I could see the sadness in his eyes. He was a really good dad, but he didn’t ever tell me why he didn’t want me to go. I didn’t understand, and so he let me.

When I was 14, the summer before 8th grade, I moved to Georgia and I moved in with my mom. So that’s how that started.

I get there. I meet my mom’s boyfriend who’s—My mom is 40; he’s 20 so he’s half her age. He goes in the house and makes me this amazing sandwich. [Laughter] I have my room and back with my dad I had to keep it clean—normal good rules. When I was with my mom, I could do anything I wanted. I could decorate how I wanted. I could just—there was no rule for my room. It was awesome. I was like “There’s going to be freedom! I’ve got people making me food. [Laughter] I get to be with my mom who I think is the coolest. I want to be just like her or Madonna one day.” [Laughter] Those were my goals.

Kim: Those two people, yes.

Sarah: Those two people. This was the 80’s, right? I move in and I think “This is awesome!” My sister lived there too, and I’d never gotten to live with my sister before. She’s a few years younger than me. I was so excited. For about a month it was awesome.

I started to notice that my mom had this real edge to her. She’d always been sarcastic. She never really had an edit to things that she said. She just sort of said whatever was on her mind. But it became really cruel.

One day I came home from school and I smiled, and I had braces. She said, “You’re so ugly with those braces.” Or she just started to cut me down a lot. If I would question her, she would act like I was crazy, or I was too sensitive. So the best way to say it is—I just learned a term, actually this past year, called gaslighting.

Gaslighting is when somebody convinces you that you don't know what you are talking about / you don't know what is up or what is down. It would be like somebody punching you in the face and you're bleeding, and they have such a way to convince you that *you* ran into their fist. Then you start to question "Wait, did they do that to me?" Then you're like "Maybe I was walking too fast. Maybe I did run into their fist." Like "Oh" because they're like "Yes, you did."

Kim: Wow.

Sarah: You begin to not trust yourself. You don't trust your opinions. You don't trust your thoughts because literally you feel crazy—like you do not know what is true and what isn't true. So when you're 14/15, in those formative teen years, talk about—you're already trying to deal with confidence issues. Now, you don't even know if you can trust your own what you see / what you hear / all of that.

So that's what was happening with my mom. She would manipulate me. She would get mad about something if I didn't do something right and I would try and be like "Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know I was not supposed to do it that way." It would just get—everything got turned around. It was very, very confusing. It's very difficult to explain and gaslighting is the best way to say it.

Kim: Okay.

Sarah: But at the end of the day you always felt like everything was your fault.

Kim: Sarah, tell me what your emotions were like when she would insult you: the way you looked, what you did, you weren't good enough. How did that make you feel on the inside?

Sarah: Well, as a 14-year-old teenager, I felt very confused and I felt angry. Here's why I felt angry. I mean there was the crying and there was the rage and there was sadness, but anger was the main thing and here's why. It's because I started to notice that my mom was drinking. Her and her boyfriend would drink a lot.

One thing is I'm paying attention—"Okay, they're drinking a lot. Wow!" Then they're changing. "Okay, so this is what's happening." Maybe there's some—I didn't understand alcoholism but maybe there's some alcoholism going on. Then what happened was I thought "Oh, she just doesn't know she's being this way." At first, I felt compassion—"She doesn't realize that when she drinks, she's mean. So I'll just tell her and then it will be okay."

Kim: Okay.

Sarah: There were those talk shows where there's an intervention, and then everybody hugs, and the person gets help and it's awesome. So that's what I thought. I go out to

tell my mom that I think she drinks too much and that she might be an alcoholic. I sit down and we're on the screened in porch. She's smoking her cigarette and drinking her drink—

Kim: And you're 14 years old?

Sarah: —and I'm 14. I come out with it and I just say "Mom, when you drink, you're really mean to me." She looked at me and she just laughed. I said, "I think you're an alcoholic." She just laughed and she said, "So what?" This was not how the talk shows go! [Laughter]

Kim: Right.

Sarah: I was really confused because she's not taking me seriously, and then that's when the rage started to build. I do what a 14-year-old would—I don't know how to fight back, right? So I just think "I'm going to hurt her." Well, what would hurt a mom? I think "I'm going to tell her I don't love her." I go "I don't even think I love you anymore," and she just laughed again. It didn't even matter.

What I began to feel as a 14-year-old when this was happening was pure rage. It was like a fire burning inside me because my words did not matter. What I felt did not matter.

I remember shortly after that I was sitting in the bathtub and I remember looking at this cheap pink daisy razor and thinking "Can you slit your wrists with a cheap pink daisy razor?" Here's the thing. It isn't that I didn't want to be alive. Yes, I was sad. Yes, I was angry. I felt very confused. But what I really wanted was for her to notice me. So I yell out because I could hear her in the kitchen making a drink—I yell out "I'm going to kill myself," and she said, "Go ahead, I dare you," and I just sobbed.

I just sobbed because I knew nothing mattered—like it didn't matter. That was the start of hopelessness. There was the fire / the rage but then there was also just sort of hopelessness. Then there was a complete lack of confidence—like maybe I am just crazy, and she doesn't care.

Kim: During that time, did you ever think about going back to live with your dad?

Sarah: It's funny because when I look back, I ask myself the same question. Now that I'm 39, why didn't I go back and live with my dad? But I think at 14, for whatever reason, I don't totally remember initially why I didn't. I think I still thought the freedom was better than the relationship I had with my stepmom.

At first, I think I thought "Well, I'm here. I can't go back. This is where I live now." So I didn't really think of it. But then, here's the thing that really secured me staying is I got a boyfriend. I basically stayed for three years because of him.

Kim: Jason, right?

Sarah: That's right.

Kim: You start school. You come from Pennsylvania down to Georgia. You start school in this southern small town and there was some culture shock, wasn't there?

Sarah: Oh, complete culture shock. So again, everything I'm telling you is from the perspective of a 14-year-old. This isn't the perspective of an adult who understands things on a different level or can rationalize or can whatever.

I'm 14, I go into this school and you have to understand where I was in the north—my fifth-grade teacher would—we had to watch *Roots* in fifth grade. My white teacher had two adoptive black sons—grown. He was—you will not be racist drilled into us. This was my experience in the north.

So I moved to this little town in the south and it's totally different. The black kids and the white kids don't sit together. There are rebel flags everywhere. The N-word is used all the time. If you even talk to somebody—If I were to talk to somebody who was black, I was called an N lover—that's what I was called.

Kim: Yes.

Sarah: I was also called a Yankee, all the time. I didn't even understand what that meant. I was like "What are you talking about I'm a Yankee. What?" [Laughter] So it was just like going back in time. I don't know how else to say it. It was very, very bizarre. Then the girls all wore like okay— [Laughter] When I came from the north, it was grunge / nirvana / the girls didn't wear makeup. We had converse shoes.

I go there and the girls wear ribbons in their hair and their hair is curled and they all have makeup on, and they wear *purses* to school which I had never seen. I had never worn a purse in my life. It was just so different!

I remember this one girl talking to me in class. She introduced herself and she's said, "What's your daddy do?" I was like I haven't said daddy since I was three. [Laughter] Now I can appreciate this. I can appreciate; I didn't then. But the overt blatant racism was a shock to me—

Kim: Okay.

Sarah: —and it was just super confusing. I didn't fit in anywhere and I didn't know what to do about that. So I had like two friends and one of them was this black girl and she was—you could tell she was very impoverished. She never had clean clothes. But she was so sweet. But because I was friends with her, I kind of became the N lover. So I never really knew where I fit.

Kim: But then you met Jason.

Sarah: Yes! So then I meet Jason and Jason didn't have a place to fit in either. Here's the thing about Jason. Jason was also neglected. He didn't have a dad. I mean he did, but he didn't know his dad at all. His mom was a crack addict and they were very poor as well. I can remember him one time wearing my sneakers to school.

So what we did was because I no longer felt like I belonged in my home. I hated my mom and the way she treated me. He felt like he didn't have a place either and so we just became each other's safe place.

It wasn't like we were in love so to speak. It wasn't like I had googly eyes for him necessarily. It was more very practical. I'd never really had a boyfriend. So here's this guy who likes me and we just became each other's everything. We spent every pretty much waking hour that we could together because it was the only place where we were loved, nurtured, cared for, seen even hugged.

I didn't have any physical affection with my mom. She just didn't. One time I remember sitting down on the couch next to her and tried to scoot up next to her and she pushed me away and she's like "What are you? A lesbian.

Kim: Aww, Sarah.

Sarah: As a teen, you think "Oh, your fine. You don't need it," but you do.

Kim: You do.

Sarah: And if you don't get it, you're going to get it somewhere. So that's what I did and that's what he did.

Kim: So you and Jason met each other's deepest needs / the needs that weren't being met at home.

Sarah: That's exactly right.

Kim: And your relationship became very intimate. You talk about how he would sneak in through your window and you guys would sleep together in your top bunk.

Sarah: Yes; yes. I started having sex when I was 14. I had a bunk bed and my top bunk was level with the one window. He would come every night, sneak in my window and spend the night with me and then leave early before school. Then he would come get me and we'd walk to school together.

Kim: Did your mother never know about this? Did she suspect anything?

Sarah: Never; or if she did, she didn't say it. I don't know. She was in her own world with her boyfriend. I think she just didn't care and if she did know, she just ignored it. I think if she would have blatantly seen it, she maybe would have been—maybe kind of faux yelled at me and told him to leave but I really wasn't that worried.

So one night for example he was in bed with me and she came—I mean she would be out watching tv and he would sneak in. This isn't even like we waited until she went to bed, okay?

But one night she came in to kiss me goodnight which I don't think she must have done very often but for whatever reason she came in to say goodnight. He was hiding like literally right next to me under the covers and I had this smile on my face like I'm totally caught. You know what I mean like and she said, "I love you."

This is why it's called *The Complicated Heart*. She was very complicated. Sometimes she'd be loving and then sometimes she'd be crazy. She says "Goodnight." I'm thinking I'm caught and then she leaves. I'm like "Oh my word. She totally didn't see you next to me."

Kim: Nothing.

Sarah: Nothing.

Kim: Had she taught you anything about sex before you started dating Jason? Was there any type of filter in your mind that said, "You know what, maybe, I shouldn't do this."

Sarah: No. I had never in my life heard that, for example, there were people who waited for sex until marriage. Never heard it. Never.

So the only thing my dad ever said to me and I'm pretty sure it was after I was already having sex was something like "I would rather you have good morals than good grades." Bless him. I don't think he knew how to talk to me. My stepmom never talked to me about it. My mom was super open about sex but not in like a motherly way—like a friend way.

Kim: Okay.

Sarah: She was very inappropriate with the way she talked to me about sex. She probably threw in something like "Be safe" or something. I don't even remember her saying that but it's possible. But there was no "Don't do anything." Or if it was, it was probably like "Don't get me in trouble if you do something."

Kim: You talk about how your relationship with Jason made you feel grown up and that relationship continued and when you were 16, you decided to do something that was

out of character for you. You talked about the girls with the bows in their hair and that was not you, definitely not you, but you decided to try out for the cheering squad, and you made it.

Sarah: I know; so weird. I'm not athletic. I am like the farthest thing from a cheerleader. I love cheering people on, but I don't know why I did it. I think I just wanted to fit in a little bit at this point. I don't know why I did it. I think I liked the cute outfits. I just did it. I don't know why. So anyway, I did it and I made the team. But I made the lowest [Laughter] part of the team—whatever that would be—

Kim: But you made it.

Sarah: I was probably having to cheer for elementary school or something. [Laughter] I get my shiny new outfit. I remember I put a ribbon in my hair and trying to be southern and my friends would make fun of me.

But then, before we actually started—I don't think we had started practicing yet and I'm watching a cartoon—I still watch cartoons before school—and I'm watching some cartoon before school. I'm eating my cereal and all of a sudden, I got real sick, and then it passes. I'm like "That's really weird." Then I start to think about the fact that I haven't had a period in a while. I don't think I really kept track that much.

All of a sudden, I started to panic. I'd never even considered I might get pregnant. We always used protection. It never was something that even entered my brain. I just didn't think it would ever happen to me.

Sure enough, we get a pregnancy test and him and I sit in my car and I remember I threw the test out the window. I'm shaking and he runs out and get it. I was like "We're going to have a baby." So we go to the local health department and I get checked and we sign up for WIC—the whole thing.

Kim: So you're going to have this child.

Sarah: Yes, I'm going to have this baby. I'm home from the health department. The lady calls. I pick up the phone. My mom happens to pick up the phone too. She says, "Is this a good time?" and I say "No." But by then, my mom said, "Why is the health department calling you?"

So I had to tell her. There was no thought in my mind about abortion. It was you just have the baby. And to be frank, in this small town, other girls/teens were getting pregnant. I wasn't like the only one, but it was still very shameful embarrassing and all those things.

I remember I called my dad after I told my mom. My mom just checked out completely. I told her and it was like she just blank faced it—didn't even deal with it. So I call my dad

and I tell him because I'm thinking "Well, I'm having a baby." He was so tenderhearted. I was scared to death to tell him. He said something like "Well, maybe it will be fun to have a little one running around."

Kim: Oh.

Sarah: It isn't that he really thought that. I think he just knew that I was scared to death. Because I asked him later, like this past year, I was like "Dad, why did you say that?" He said he just remembered hearing another parent say that to their teen daughter one time. Just about "We'll talk about this later."

Kim: Okay.

Sarah: Then I call my grandmother, who was my dad's mom back in Pennsylvania, who I was so close with. We would call each other best friends. I didn't even call her grandma. I called her by her first name.

I called her and she said, "I'll have it taken care of." I was like "What are you talking about? I'm keeping my baby." She hung up the phone on me. So Jason and I just made plans—we were like "I guess we'll move into a little trailer and we'll have this baby and that's what we'll do." So no more cheerleading team. I had to quit the team.

Kim: What went through your mind when your grandmother said those words? Did you know what she was talking about by saying that she would take care of it?

Sarah: I knew what she was saying but I didn't really understand. I didn't really know what abortion was.

Kim: Okay.

Sarah: I understood she was saying to have it taken care of she'd make sure I wouldn't have the baby, but I hadn't really learned much about abortion. I didn't really know anything about it or anything like that. What was really difficult, I think, was—so this was in the spring when I found out I was pregnant and so I was going to Pennsylvania for the summer because I would go back with my dad in the summers.

Kim: Yes.

Sarah: I fly back to Pennsylvania and she wouldn't look at me or talk to me or anything. So I became like this outcast. *That* was harder than anything else because I no longer received love. My dad, who loved me and was such a good dad, I think he must have felt pressure from her because he started—he didn't treat me unkindly, but he just sort of put up a wall. Like there was definitely a wall.

So I felt just completely utterly alone, without love and like a total outcast. It was terrible. But I still was like “Well, I’m having a baby.” But I was so sick, too, which added onto it—just throwing up morning, noon, and night. There was no morning sickness. It was *all day* sickness. I was so frail and so sick.

Kim: So you’re no longer receiving love in your mother’s home and now—

Sarah: And I don’t have my boyfriend because he’s back in Georgia.

Kim: He’s back in Georgia and you go to the people who have been showing you love all along—your dad / your grandmother—and now, because you’re pregnant, that love has been removed.

Sarah: Yes.

Kim: Alone.

Sarah: Alone. I mean that’s what it is. You feel—and you’re 16. You forget how young 16 is. Like 16 sounds old but like really, it’s not.

Kim: It’s not really.

Sarah: I just didn’t even know how to process it. I didn’t think through it. I wasn’t making plans. It was literally just: I’m pregnant, and I’m alone, and I guess we’ll figure this out. What started to happen was everyone tried to convince me what to do.

My grandmother obviously wanted me to have an abortion. My stepmom was Catholic, and she wanted me to have the baby and then, she would raise it like it was my brother or sister—which I was like “No that’s really weird.”

Then I was like “Well, I could do adoption. I know there’s families who can’t have kids so why don’t I do that?” But nobody liked that idea either. Nobody was listening to me. Nobody ever said “Sarah, how do you feel? What do you want to do?” So it just, again, was really confusing.

Then finally, I was three months pregnant, so sick, so alone, so tired of it—wanting to be a teen but can’t be. My body’s changing.

I’ve got acne all over my face, like everything’s you know, and my other grandmother—my mom’s mom—came to visit me. She sat down next to me on my bed. She put her arm around me, and she was so kind. Like nobody was touching me, you know what I mean? She puts her arm around me, and she said “Honey, I really think you should have an abortion because then you can go to prom / you can have a life.”

Kim: Oh wow.

Sarah: Yes. I just felt like she was the first person who showed me love and affection that I was immediately like “Okay, I’ll have the abortion.”

One, because I wanted to be back in the fold. I wanted to be loved again. And two, I was just tired. I was tired and sick, and I couldn’t fight it anymore. I was like whatever. Whatever you guys want to do. I’ll do whatever makes everybody else happy.

So it was like this resignation. I told my grandmother from Pennsylvania who told me she would have it taken care of and so I was back in the fold. She had a friend who was a doctor. After he examined me, he said I was way too fidgety for him to perform the abortion in his office or in an abortion clinic. So I would actually have to go to a hospital to be put to sleep.

The night before I had the abortion, I just sat in my bed and I cried, and I held my stomach and asked the baby to forgive me. I went in the next day. We went to the hospital. They changed my name because I had kind of a prominent family and put me under completely. And to my dad’s credit, he was with me the whole time. I mean not for the actual procedure but leading up to it. He held my hand. He was with me. I was so scared. Then I started to freak out and get real fidgety and the doctor had to up my medication. He stayed with me until they wheeled me away.

Then they—you know you count backwards—99, 98, 97... I’m out. I wake up and it’s done. I move in with my grandmother, my dad’s mom from Pennsylvania, because my stepmom doesn’t want me to live at home anymore because at this point, she hates me because of what I’ve chosen to do. So I sleep for two days at my grandmother’s and I wake up and I walk into the kitchen. She’s got toast and a smile, and we never talk about it. Never talked about again.

Kim: So just like that she changes. She goes from withholding love to extending love for you after you make this choice to abort your child.

Sarah: That’s right. And I can say that at the time and for several years after, I had a lot of resentment for her. She got cancer the next year or maybe even it was that summer. It may have even been that summer. I can’t remember if it was that summer or the next summer, but she ended up getting cancer and she ended up dying pretty quickly from it. I remember thinking “This is your punishment for what you made me do.” I never cried at her funeral and nobody could understand it. I didn’t cry for two years. After two years, I did finally grieve because I did love her, and I knew she loved me.

Now as an adult looking back, I think “Yes, what she did was wrong but, in her mind, she thought she was doing the best thing for me. She was a successful business woman, my grandmother, and she wanted me to be this successful feminist business woman who could do what I needed to do make money. So in her mind she was doing the best thing for me to set me up for success. I can look back and see that now.

Kim: I have to wonder if part of them wanting you to have this abortion had to do with saving the family name.

Sarah: Oh, for sure, because when I was saying that I wanted to have the baby, they had said “Well, we’ll have you move to New Jersey, with an aunt, until you have the baby so that nobody knows you’re pregnant.

Kim: Yes, there you go.

Sarah: So if I was going to do adoption or something, or if I were to move to Georgia, it would be later that they’d tell people that I got married and had a baby or something. But no, no, no, it totally was going to be a secret. Yes; yes.

Kim: So you moved to Pennsylvania. You stay there and you actually have a fresh start.

Sarah: Yes, well first, after the abortion, I moved back to Georgia. I stay there for one more year and I finally realize this is terrible. Everything with my mom just got worse. She was a mess. The boyfriend, I didn’t really like him anymore. We were just together because we were. So I was over it. I was so sick of that town. I was so sick of everything it meant to me.

Finally, I was like I’m done. I’m moving back. I’m going to Pennsylvania where nobody knows anything. I can get a fresh start. That’s what I’m going to do. My dad wanted me to move back so, so badly. So I moved back. My grandmother had died of cancer so I couldn’t live with her. I had to move back home which was awful. Now things with my stepmom were even worse.

I remember one day she comes downstairs and she starts yelling at me about the abortion. I was like “God forgives me.” I didn’t even know what I was talking about of course, but “God forgives me.”

She said, “God may forgive you, but I never will.” So I have to live in this house again like this. But at this point I felt it was better than living with my mom. So it’s tense either way. I was used to living in tense.

I move back. I get this fresh start. My dad has money. He gives me money. I get to go shopping. I get to have all new clothes. I go to this rich high school in the town of Penn State—where Penn State is—and I just get to completely start over. I’m the new girl, right?—like my braces are off. I’m kind of pretty. I grew up. I get attention. It felt really *good* to start over. I felt like I was getting a totally fresh start.

Kim: So you come from this volatile background. You haven’t received the type of love that you needed. When did Jesus enter the picture?

Sarah: Okay. So we've got to go back. This is the coolest thing about God to me is how He woos us. So I did not choose God. He totally chose me.

When I was a little girl, I told you my stepmom was Catholic, so I used to always go to Catholic church with her. I didn't like it, but she had a Bible next to my bed. I would pick it up and I would always start in Genesis and I would try to read a page. I never understood it so I would close it back, right?

But then, my sister—we have different dads and she was going to—I was probably nine, maybe, so she was real little—three or something like that—and my mom had dropped her off for a visitation with her dad and he never came back.

So essentially, he kidnapped her and there was all this other stuff going on. There was accusations of my mom sexually abusing us which wasn't true but there was all these things happening. So he took her and left. We didn't know where she was. I'm living with my dad but of course, I know my mom's trying to find my sister.

I just started to pray, every night, to a God I did not know but I believed there was a God. I just didn't know anything about Jesus or who He was. I was praying and I remember being like "God, please find my sister. Please find my sister. Please find my sister."

After six months or a year, they found her in another state. So when they found her, something cemented inside of me that there was a God and that He heard me. That was very significant. So I didn't know anything else but that was something significant.

Fast forward, I'm living in Georgia, 14 years old, my uncle comes to visit, and he gives me this Clay Crosse—He was a Christian singer—cassette tape. He's like "Here you might like this," and why on earth I chose to listen to it, I have no idea. [Laughter] But I did. I had no idea there was Christian music. I'd never heard of that. I knew there were hymns from the Catholic church, but I didn't know people sang about God otherwise.

So I put this tape in and I remember crawling up on my bunk bed and just listening to it. I just started to cry, and I just started to pray "God, I don't know what this man is talking about." I knew he was singing about God. I knew he was singing about someone called Jesus, but I didn't understand it. I remember praying "God, I don't know what that is, but I want it." I'm just bawling asking God to give me whatever it is that this man is singing about.

And so there was another thing. Then that same uncle—he was just visiting from out of town, so he didn't stay but while he was there, he took us to a church. Now you have to understand I'd only ever been to a Catholic church. In fact, I didn't even know there was other churches. I thought there was only Catholic. I had no idea. We go to this church. We walk up. They open the doors and people are like clapping and singing and I was

like “What is this?” I remember I had this thought go through my mind—it didn’t make any sense at the time—and it was “The Spirit is here.”

Kim: Wow.

Sarah: Which I wouldn’t have understood that but that’s the thought in my brain. I just remember thinking “Wow! People are smiling like they seem to be happy to be in church. This is weird.” After the music, that I’m loving, we sit down. The preacher starts to preach, and I can understand him! I feel like he gives a sermon and I was like “Wow! He just talked like a normal person.” I felt like I understood what he said. That was another sort of cementing.

But then, my uncle left and of course, I didn’t go back but I always remembered it. I couldn’t drive. It wasn’t like I could drive myself there. That was just another thing. So then I was like “Oh yeah, I believe in God. I don’t know anything, but I believe in God.”

Then that same uncle—last story about him—but he’d given me this little book called *Armed and Dangerous*. Basically, it was just a book of scriptures on different topics. So I would just sit and read it. Like I could look up depression or alcoholism or joy and I would read what God’s Word said. I didn’t have a Bible anymore. I didn’t know but I just knew this was what God said about things.

So fast forward *again* to Pennsylvania; moved back. I’m in 11th grade now and all the cool kids go to this thing called Young Life on Wednesday nights. It’s to just get out of the house. So I was like I want to get out of my house so I’m going to go, too. I go to this thing called Young Life. For those who don’t know what that is, it’s basically a ministry that reaches out to unchurched high school kids and they are allowed in the public schools or at least they were. I don’t know if they are now.

So they could go in and invite kids to come to this Wednesday night gathering. They would sing songs and have fun and do skits and share a really short little sermon about Jesus. So that is when I began to *finally* hear the gospel. That’s when I *finally* began to hear that Jesus was not just God’s son but that He was God and He came to die for us and that He died for our sins and rose again so that we could have life. And I mean I was hook, line, and sinker. I got a Bible. I started to read it. I could understand it. God was just opening my eyes.

So I didn’t have some date that I came to know the Lord. It was a puzzle. It was like all a wooing and a piecing together. So I was reading the Bible. I was learning. I was going to Young Life. I went to Young Life camp did all the things. But I will say when I went to college, I got involved with the Navigators which is a collegiate ministry. I know you were part of Cru and Athletes in Action and stuff.

Kim: Yes.

Sarah: Okay, so Navigators is what I got involved in at Penn State. We went on this retreat and the speaker that night said, “What would you do if Jesus walked in the room right now?” And my immediate thought was “I would hide. He would not want to see me.” Nobody had to tell me I was a sinner. I knew all of the bad things that I had done. I had so much shame. I thought Jesus would not want to see me and so I would hide if He came into this room.

I don’t know if someone told me. I don’t know if it was the Spirit. I’m sure somebody said this and my spirit connected but they said something to the effect of “Sarah, Jesus knows everything that you’ve ever done and He knows everything you’re doing and He knows everything you’re going to do and He loves you and this is why He died for you.” And that was it. I was done. Sold. Jesus girl. That was it for me.

Kim: So when you look back over your life, you’re able to see those little touches from Jesus even in the midst of those painful times: living with your mom, going through an abortion, all of those things. He was there right with you.

Sarah: That is the thing I always say that it blows my mind, actually, is that I always felt like I was in this pit, kind of, especially the years with my mom. It was as though He would come and sit with me there and just let me know He was with me and that He was light. And it was like He knew that at some point I would walk out of that pit with Him. But during those times, it was just like He was with me in it.

Kim: So when you trusted Christ, did your life and your lifestyle change? Did you become a new person? What did that look like for you?

Sarah: Yes. So at first, it did. At first, I became super gung ho. I learned the rules. Don’t have sex before marriage and then all whatever. I used to listen to—I don’t know if you’ve heard of Dr. Laura Schlessinger?

Kim: Yes, I’ve heard of her.

Sarah: She was a radio host. Well, I used to listen to her in high school and she would say “I’m a serious Jew.” So I used to say “Well, I’m a serious Christian.” [Laughter] Because I had grown up with such chaos, I really became very moralistic and she was very moralistic and so I clung to that. I became real black and white because I needed those rules. I needed that control. I needed something that was different from the chaos of my life.

So I would say I became a very, very serious follower of Jesus. I wanted to consume every like I just could not stop reading the scriptures. I would tell every single person about Jesus. I was that person—like super obnoxious. Before I even knew enough, I was telling everybody about Jesus. I used to argue with an atheist in my college dorm and I remember one time saying, “the five gospels” or something and he was like “Aren’t

there four?" and I was like "Yes." I didn't even know anything. I would go into chat rooms and tell people about the locusts in Revelation. I mean I was crazy.

Kim: Wow.

Sarah: But I was so earnest. I was so earnest. But then, even though I had all of these very strong convictions, because I had not dealt with the *wounds* from all the years with my mom, all of the neglect, all of these different—the abortion. There was some sexual abuse. All of these different things, they had not actually been dealt with. So Jesus in His kindness, you know He lets us, we come to know Him. I think we become zealous and then, I feel like He kind of—that things start to pop up in our lives: old patterns, bad habits, sin habits.

And I think, at the time, you feel gross and terrible and beat yourself up and you hate yourself for it. The whole Paul "I do what I don't want to do and what I do want to do, I don't do." But I actually think it is the Lord's kindness that lets those things come up. Because as they come up, you begin to realize He's showing you things that need to still be dealt with. The things that still need to be healed / forgiven / set free—things to repent of that you didn't know. So there's almost like a grace period after you become a Christian, I think, and then the things start to come up. That started to happen.

So I, basically, was still very physical in relationships. I didn't want to be. At this point, I had a different boyfriend and he said he was a Christian, but he would still always want to do stuff with me, and I didn't understand that. It was just always very conflicting. I was still living a fleshy life, but I didn't want to be. So I had the Spirit in me.

Then I started to get really depressed in college and by my junior year, I would go out and drink and hook up with guys—like I couldn't be alone. I just remember if I was alone, anxiety would crawl all over me and I would be having really like a panic attack. I had to get out and I had to be with somebody. I hated it. I didn't want to do that, but I didn't know how to stop.

I can remember in my junior year just getting on my knees in my apartment and praying "God, I can't go any lower and if you don't do something, I am done." Literally, that week—I think it was that very week—I had to get an internship because I was studying to be a counselor. I didn't know of a place except that I had seen this one building one block from my apartment and it looked like a counseling place.

I remember I walked in there and I said, "Can I get an application to intern?" They said "Sure." They gave me an application. I go get my pen, go to a coffee shop, I'm reading the application. It says, "What do you know about abortion?" I was like that's a weird question. I was like "I don't know." Because I had put it off for so long. I think I had told a boyfriend or something, but it was always like "Will you still love me if I tell you I did this bad thing?" It was like I never had actually dealt with it.

So it says, “What do you know about abortion?” I was like “I don’t know anything. I was so detached. I literally go and buy a book on it. Now this had to have been—I swear an angel must have put this book on the shelf because it was in Barnes and Noble. I can’t imagine Barnes and Noble would carry this book today, but it was this book called something like *Forbidden Grief: The Hidden Pain of Abortion*. It was all of these—I still can’t believe Barnes and Noble had it—and it was all of these statistics on women who had had abortions. It was very research based and PTSD and suicidal thoughts and depression and being promiscuous and all of these things.

So I’m reading this book and I’m in this coffee shop and I’m starting to cry. I’m like “This is me.” I go back to this counseling place and it turns out it’s a crisis pregnancy clinic. I had never heard of crisis pregnancy clinics. Had I and had I gone to one, I’m sure I would have had my baby. So I tell them “I don’t think I’m supposed to be an intern. I think I’m supposed to get help. I think God led me here.”

Kim: Wow.

Sarah: I know! I had the kindest, most gentle woman take me through a Bible study called *Forgiven and Set Free* and we went through like eight weeks of post abortion counseling, where I actually dug into what I felt / what happened / what were the circumstances—all of it. I went through all of the emotions like anger, sadness, depression, denial. I can remember one time trying to do this book and throwing it across the room and being like “*I hate this*” because you have to really look at things under the surface. It’s painful and hard.

Kim: Right. How important do you think it is for someone who has gone through an abortion—how important is it for them to seek counsel afterwards? Because I believe there are so many women out there who do this thing. It’s just another thing. It’s easy to do.

Sarah: Right; right.

Kim: It’s encouraged in some situations. They just go about their lives; they think everything’s fine now. Yes, I can go and be this great woman of power / this feminist / activist. I can go and do all of these things because I made this choice. But what they don’t realize is that there is some deeply seeded pain, similar to what you were feeling, that is there as a result of that choice of taking the life of their own child. So how important is it for them?

Sarah: Well, I think the greatest gaslighting of our day is actually the pro-abortion lobby to women. Because they are told they should be fine and it’s no big deal.

Kim: Yes.

Sarah: And how crazy could that make you because then, if you do start to think about it or maybe, you do feel sad, you're told you shouldn't be because there's no reason to be. That is gaslighting! I think it's one of the greatest gaslighting of our day.

So I could not say that every single woman is sad over their abortion because I have no idea. I will say that because God gave us wombs and because we are made to be life givers and when we have that baby in us, we become a mother. Whether you abort / whether you miscarry / whether you have the baby / whether you choose adoption, you are a mother now, forevermore. When that is taken from you, or even if you choose it, so often that choice is made because of pressure / confusion / circumstances. It's very, very difficult and it's very painful and it's very misunderstood.

I ended up working at that crisis pregnancy clinic for two years and I was a counselor there and I never counseled anybody, I don't think, that wanted to choose—they were choosing it because they felt like they didn't have a choice. It was like “My parents are going to kill me.” That was the number one thing I heard. “I can't tell my parents.” I mean that was the number one thing. It's a real scary situation. You're filled with shame and so I would say if anybody—I want to say two things.

Any woman who is listening who has had an abortion, whether you chose it or whether you felt like you were forced into it or for whatever reason, I would say this: one, you have permission to grieve. I know that you're told that you don't need to, but I want to tell you that you have permission to grieve. Because you did lose a baby and that is a valid loss. It is worth grieving even if you're okay with your choice so to speak. Like you think you're okay with it and maybe you are, you can still grieve that. You did have a baby. You are a mother and you can grieve that.

The second thing I would say is if you've never told anybody or you have kind of told somebody but it's always just stayed locked up inside of you, I would encourage you with all of my heart to find a safe person to talk to and if you can go through post abortion counseling—which is free by the way—I would totally encourage you to do it.

Crisis pregnancy clinics all over the United States have post abortion counseling for free that they offer in groups or individual. It is so important because what it will do is it's going to free you in so many ways. Because you're actually going to look and you're going to get under the surface of things. I guarantee if you have not dealt with it, then you have triggers / emotions / lies that you're believing—different things that you have not healed that Jesus wants to set free in you.

So for example, I couldn't hug women. I had a mistrust of women. I was angry a lot and I didn't understand why I was always angry. If I saw small children, I would tear up. I was so scared that I wouldn't be a good mom, or I wouldn't know how to love my children well or attach to them. When you deal with an abortion, you are going to be freed from so many things. And you're going to be able to truly repent / understand the

circumstances / forgive people who maybe have been involved. All of these things but the biggest thing is I'd really encourage you to do it.

I want to tell you something really special that happened in my post abortion counseling and I want to make that encouragement for those of you I'm saying, "Seek counseling if you can."

At the end of my post abortion counseling, I really, really wanted to know the sex of my baby, but I didn't even though I was three months along. My counselor said "Why don't you just ask God? Just ask the Lord, He can tell you. Doesn't mean He will but you can ask." I remember praying. I just went home. And I said "Lord, I would really, really like to know the sex of my baby so I could name them."

That night I had a dream and it was so vivid. I've had only, maybe, three in my life very, very vivid dreams that I knew were from God or that I believe were from God. This was one of them.

In the dream, there was this little boy. He was about seven years old and he had blond hair and blue eyes. I just kept saying "I'm so sorry and I was crying, and I was like "I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry." And he was like "Mom, it's okay. I'm going to see you again one day," and his name was David. So forevermore I have a David in heaven that I'm going to get to see again one day.

So if you've had an abortion you do have a baby. You are a mother. You have that baby in heaven waiting for you one day. So be willing to go there with the pain and get healing and get free.

Kim: Thank you for sharing that Sarah. It is incredible how God is able to and wants to meet us exactly where we are.

Sarah: Yes, and the enemy wants us to believe "No, you can't be forgiven," or "You're going to be punished because of this. You're not going to be able to have kids or you're going to whatever." There are so many things and God is just there wanting to let us know He loves us and wants to free us.

Kim: So the Lord set you free as you sought counseling regarding your abortion, but you also needed to get free of that stronghold that your mother had on you.

Sarah: Yes.

Kim: And you went to a counselor and that counselor or minister's wife introduced you to some core lies that you were believing.

Sarah: Yes.

Kim: Do you remember what some of those were and how they were affecting your life?

Sarah: Yes. So this was a whole new concept for me. I remember going over to this woman's house and I was telling her "I'm a mess and I'm emotional blah blah blah. I don't know why I'm so angry or depressed or whatever."

She wrote this list for me and it was like "I'm ugly. I'm out of control. I'm not good enough." Just this whole list of things and she said "Do any of these stand out to you? I circled "I'm not good enough" which is a big one for people. I think "I'm stupid." That was one.

Then she made this other list and it was like "I have to be in control. I have to be beautiful. I have to be" you know, just all of these I have to. I was like I have to be in control. I have to be seen as good enough. Like I want people to see me as competent and smart. What she taught me was, deep down, we all want to be what? We want to be loved. We want to be seen. We want to be secure.

Often, because in our childhood and growing we—Dave Bowman, her husband, says children are incredible observers but terrible interpreters. So what we do is we observe things and then we interpret them to mean something that maybe they didn't mean.

So if my mom is mean to me, I interpret that as something must be wrong with me. I observed a true thing, but I misinterpreted it. That's what we all do. We all do this in our lives. We don't know we're doing it. It's totally subconscious or whatever. I had developed these lies about myself.

So what would happen is if somebody would step on a landmine in my heart that made me feel like I was crazy, or if they didn't listen to me / if they didn't take me seriously—because that was a big one—I would rage. I would get so *angry* and it's because I was operating—they had stepped on this idea that I had believed about myself—like I'm not good enough or you don't take me seriously. Now, you're confronting my I have to be good enough and if you don't see me as good enough, then you have just made me rage.

Here's how we figure out our core lies. Start to pay attention to the things that make you angry, depressed, or anxious. I'm not talking about chemical depression. I'm talking about in general—like the things that if you start to feel down / if you start to get angry / if you start to feel anxious, or fear.

With fear, there's almost always a lie. What was the circumstance behind that? What did somebody say or do? So you can look at that and you can say "Lord, what's going on there? What is the lie that I'm believing and what am I thinking I need to do to compensate for that lie?"

Essentially, she taught me this whole concept and once I was able to start to recognize my own lies and then the goals that I made because of them that are often quite sinful because I'm now demanding that you see me a certain way instead of just accepting that my identity alone is in Christ. Nobody has the authority to tell me who I am but God, and He says that I am loved, and I am seen, and I am valuable and that's what is important.

Nobody can take that away from me. But when we're living out of our lies then we're operating out of those lies and once we deal with them you can be free. Like you can actually be set free to not have to walk in them or put them on your children.

Kim: Some of those lies that you believed came from the fact that your mother told them to you. Your mother looked at you as if you were stupid or ugly and you internalized her verbal abuse which made you have this certain mindset.

I believe a lot of times when we're in abusive or neglectful relationships we think that the only way out of them is for that other person to change. But the truth is we don't have the power to change other people.

Sarah: We don't have control.

Kim: We don't have control.

Sarah: That was one of mine. I have to have control. Right, and I didn't. I can't. I can't control it.

Kim: And your counselor told you to do something that was quite different than what you probably expected her to do and that was to grieve the loss of your mother. Not the physical loss of your mother because she was still alive. But you needed to grieve that mother that you wish you would have had, or you wish she would have been. Tell me about that.

Sarah: So the core lies was with a mentor of mine. Then the abortion stuff. So this was another counselor and how I got involved with this—God just kept bringing people into my life. This is what He does as things come up, okay?

Kim: I love it.

Sarah: So one year my mom—again, I'm in college—she doesn't send me a birthday card. For whatever reason, that was the trigger for me. All of a sudden, I was like "My mom doesn't love me. She didn't send me a birthday card."

All of this time, I had been angry and now, for the first time, I was sad. For the first time, I started to feel like "Wait a minute, I really want a mom." I'm looking at my friends and they get to talk to their mom, or they call their mom and have these long conversations

where they can ask their mom's advice about boys, or they curl up and watch a movie with their mom and I don't have any of that.

So now the anger has subsided and now, I'm just really sad and I really want a mom and I'm just crying over it. I want this so bad. So I take myself and I take my mother issues and I go to a counselor that somebody recommended to me. I'm telling her all of these things and I'm thinking she's going to say "Yes, you can have that one day. Your mom can become that or somebody else is going to become that for you," and I'm waiting for those words and she doesn't say it.

Instead she said "Sarah, you need to mourn the loss of a mother because you don't have one." So that kind of shocked me and I was like "What?" She said essentially like you did not have those things and we're supposed to and so it is an actual loss and you need to grieve it and part of grieving is letting go of the expectation that she will be a mom for you. And that was gutting because I had to actually face the truth that I did not have a mom. So I had to grieve it as though she died. I had to grieve that loss that I did not have a mom and I wasn't going to have a mom.

Now, caveat here because I'm always in counseling at some point or other in my life. Recently, I had another counselor say, "We never mourn the future because that's where hope is." So we don't ever want to mourn the future. You mourn the things that you've lost in the past or that you aren't getting like my expectation of a mom but don't ever mourn the future because that is where hope sits.

I had to mourn what my mom wasn't. Here's what that enabled me to do. Going through the grieving process which it was a terrible grief. It was so heartbreaking. But what it allowed me to do is it allowed me to let go of the expectation that she would be my mom like a nurturing mother and instead, I was then able to look at her as just a human, made in the image of God, who had her own wounds and sin and everything else.

So did that mean it was perfect and I made the switch right away? No, it took a long time and it took a lot of God's help. But God kept calling me into a relationship with her and He kept calling me to forgive her and not walk away.

Because see Sarah, in the flesh, hated her. Sarah, in the flesh, wanted to cut off all relationship and there are times for that in toxic relationships. But that was not what God was asking me to do and I needed to obey Him. So the only way that I was going to be able to do that and He knew this was to mourn her as a mom. Then I was able to just love her, forgive her, and see her as a person. That started the journey of reconciliation for us.

Kim: In your book, you write about the very difficult back and forth between you and your mom. There were things she said and did to you that were heartbreaking. That made me so sad for you, but at the same time you insert pages from her journal. As I see the depth of her heart / the depth of her own pain, I began to be sad for her as well.

I think you do an extraordinary job of telling her story and of telling your story. Describe, now, what healing looks like for you today.

Sarah: Boy, that's actually a really big question but let me start it by saying this: when I knew that it was time to tell this story, the thing that I didn't want to do was exclude my mom's perspective from it because we're all so threaded together, right? The more I learned about my own wounds and how I had reacted because of them and after mourning the loss of a mother and learning how to set boundaries and all those things, then, I looked at her. I thought "What causes a person to become an alcoholic? What causes a person to become so cruel to their own children?"

And I didn't have to figure this out. This isn't like "Hey, if there's somebody's hurting you, figure out their life." No. But I just got curious and I got curious after she passed away. Because I found her journals and I read them all and in reading her journals, I found that there was this woman who was heartbroken / who was wounded / who never felt like she had love from her own father / who had been abused herself / who had had abortions / who had had terrible accusations made against her that she never recovered from.

I was able to look at that and say "I can have compassion on the person because I can see the little girl and I can see what she didn't get and I can see how she was hurt and wounded and how that led to her hurting and wounding me." So it's not an excuse for what she did but I can understand it.

So when I did this book, I wanted her voice to be a part of it. So after, like you said, after every chapter are pieces of her journals that go back to the 80's or 70's—before she even had me, there's some all the way up through. So you're not just hearing my voice but you're hearing her voice as well.

So as far as the healing goes, years. I mean, I'm still healing. I mean there are things that I probably don't even know that God still wants to do. But the biggest part of it was, honestly, it's obeying God. Because with everything He brings up, we have a choice. So I had a choice. I can face it and I can say "Okay, I'm going to walk through this." Or I can turn away and say "I don't want to deal with this. It's too hard. It's too painful."

God's going to keep bringing things up until we die because He loves us that much. [Laughter] It's called sanctification. But when we accept the invitation to face our pain, our sin, our wounds—all of these things—each time He brings them up, there's a little bit more healing and there's a little bit more freedom.

So with my mom, there was mourning. There was the invitation to accept the reality that she wasn't my mother and to let go of that expectation. Once I did that, I was able to walk forward when God said to forgive her. "Okay, God, how do I forgive her?" And then there's the next thing. "Sarah, you can set boundaries." "Okay, Sarah, here's the next

thing. Continue in a relationship with her. You do not have to see her all the time.” I only saw her like once a year.

Kim: You can set those boundaries, right?

Sarah: You can set boundaries. We’re never fully healed on this earth, but we’re set on a path of healing and we can be set free. The more that we tell our secrets. The more that we face the truth of things. That’s what grieving is. You’re just facing reality. You’re just facing the truth of something / going through the process of what that is. So many of us don’t like to face our own feelings or emotions or pain because it’s hard. All of those things, though, as God brings them up and as we trust Him, that’s going to set you on a path of healing.

And I would say today, I am way more healed and free than I was then. I’m not as angry. I’m not as sad. I can see my triggers. I can know when a lie is coming up. Because it’s not like my lies go away. They don’t go away. But I can recognize them and go “Okay, this is a lie.”

Brene’ Brown says, “What is the story I’m telling myself?” So now I can go “Am I stupid? What is the story I’m telling myself? Oh, I feel stupid because blah, blah, blah.” But that doesn’t mean that I’m stupid and also, I don’t have to be the smartest person because Jesus loves me anyway. So we can begin to see our lies, or we can begin to see our triggers and that’s going to keep us on a path of healing and freedom.

Kim: Well, I love how God is so gentle with us when He brings healing into our lives.

Sarah: Yes.

Kim: He doesn’t expose it all at once. He doesn’t overwhelm us with all the issues that we have locked inside. But little by little, and one by one, He brings them to the surface so that He can heal them. I believe that He will use your story and is using your story and your book to bring healing and wholeness to a lot of people’s lives. So thank you so much for joining me.

Sarah: Thank you so much and what’s really exciting and I hope that people will be willing to check out the book because what I didn’t tell you and I’m not going to tell you is just the amazing, incredible, impossible prayers that God answered—that are really pretty surprising. So I can’t wait for you to read what actually happened to my mom and to me.

Kim: After talking to Sarah Mae, I gained a new perspective on how to love difficult people. You know what, everybody has a story. When Sarah read her mother’s journals, it really softened her heart and helped her to see the pain she was going through all those years.

And it made me ask myself the question: who are those toxic people in my life that are difficult to love? And what would happen if I were to take a risk and get to know them better—learn about their triumphs / their trials / their tragedies. Would it give me more patience with them? Would it help me to forgive? Would it be possible for me to push through the pain and love them the way they needed to be loved?

I know you have to have healthy boundaries. But in John 15:12, Jesus says “This is my command, that you love one another as I have loved you.” And if you think about it, Jesus loved us while we were yet sinners. He didn’t wait for us to get our act together. He simply loved.

Sarah Mae challenged me and made me ask myself another question: can I imitate God’s love for us by loving others in their sin, while they are yet sinners, before they apologize / before they even admit that they’ve hurt me? And the answer is yes. Sarah Mae has proven it’s possible and in the power of the Holy Spirit, I can do so, too.

Thanks for listening. If you’d like more information about Sarah Mae or her book, *The Complicated Heart*, check out our show notes on the *Unfavorable Odds* page at FamilyLife.com/podcasts.

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Next time, on *Unfavorable Odds*, John Driver introduces us to a young man best known as Purdue University’s ultimate super fan.

John: He threw a frisbee at his best friend’s birthday party and the tumor was so involved and had weakened the bone so much, that he actually broke his arm.

Kim: John Driver next time.

I’m Kim Anthony. Thanks for listening to this episode of *Unfavorable Odds*.

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